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haviour is seen by all. But even human coitus is not altogether hidden from view, largely because of the sleeping arrangements. The Badaga house has at most three rooms, but when it is occupied by a joint family children usually find themselves sleeping with married relatives in one or the other of these rooms. It is thus a commonplace to see dimly one's parents or married siblings engaging in sexual activity. Couples of any age are normally very embarrassed if they think they are being watched, and normally stop what they are doing if they suspect anyone else is aware of it. If sharing the bed with children a couple will have intercourse while lying on their sides so as to be less visible and turbulent. Yet in practice anyone who wants to watch his relatives in coitus has simply to pretend to be asleep.

Sexual relations are not confined to the home. Indeed, lovers and adulterers have to manage as comfortably as they can in the bush; and here too they may be followed and spied upon by children. Parties of boys sometimes prowl around a village late at night, especially while a festival is distracting most of the adults, to find out who is staying at home for sexual purposes. Girls are normally uninterested in watching people have coitus although they have probably all witnessed the act at one time or another, I was told.

3.4. Sexual experimentation in Badaga society runs the gamut from heterosexual relations with a lover or spouse to homosexuality, masturbation and bestiality. We will consider the non-reproductive forms of behaviour first.

Masturbation is common in both sexes. Small girls may sometimes be seen doing it in public. It is said that adolescent girls masturbate by inserting an egg-plant fruit in the vagina, but while hospitals get cases proving that this does occur it cannot be a common practice, for any girl wanting some sexual experience can easily find a willing young man, especially in those villages which still lack street lighting. Adolescent boys and some adult men masturbate, and small boys may occasionally be seen doing it too.

Homosexual relations occur between young men and boys. Even older men sleeping with boys sometimes satisfy themselves between the boys' thighs. The men presume that lesbian relations also occur, but their only evidence for this is that a few adolescent girls show an abnormally rapid growth of the breasts, thought to be the result of a lesbian's manipulations. (The word *peggusi* can mean either a male or a female homosexual.)

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839 [159] Bestiality is an even rarer phenomenon than homosexuality. The only instances that were reported to me were, first, the curing of a venereal disease by intercourse with a donkey (6.61); and secondly, an adult herdsman who was seen standing on a rock and having relations with a female buffalo. The Basel Mission presbytery [199] minutes for 1903 (written by Badagas) cite similar problems with a Badaga Christian teacher: "...last year he committed sin with a Toda girl...when he was on the way to Ooty to see his wife, who had gone there for her confinement. He also confessed that he had committed the same sin with his own country mare. This was all he confessed." (Basel Mission 1905: 305.)

128 3.5. These however are for Badagas aberrant forms of sexual expression; most experimentation takes the form of heterosexual intercourse. Its techniques will be described later (3.16), but here we will discuss only those situations in which young Badagas learn about sexuality. For purposes of clarity we can talk about affairs with lovers of the same community, extra-community liaisons, and situations in which parents used to arrange formal training for their adolescent children.

864 835 836 [178] This last custom no longer prevails. It used to occur until some 30 years ago, the initiative to train a girl being taken by her own parents or another close relative; while a boy would usually seek his indoctrination in the arms of an elder brother's wife. In a typical case a man might tell his wife that their unmarried daughter was now old enough for sexual initiation. The wife would then speak to a married daughter about the matter, and she in turn would ask her own husband to offer the necessary practical training when an [609] opportunity arose. In any event, it was supposed to be a relative, such as sister's husband — even if only in a classificatory sense — who should initiate a young girl. If a girl did not undergo such an initiation there was another opportunity for her immediately following her wedding. In this instance the person who would deflorate the bride was not the groom, but a more experienced man who could be gentle with her for the first night or two, and would be related to her as a classificatory husband's brother. The new husband would be absent on these occasions. This custom is no longer [178] followed.

864 835 609 836 The obverse situation would involve a youth when aged about seventeen being given sexual training by a brother's wife who might be ten years or more his senior, and in some instances used to be

and Irula women had *belle*, whereas today only a tiny minority of them do.

People with either of these diseases are generally weak and unhealthy. *Su:le* can be recognized by the watery sores, but *belle* cannot be seen because it is "inside the body" of men. A therapist can tell from a person's face whether he has either disease. The remedy is to eat opium, as often as three times daily. In earlier days Badaga youths were encouraged to have relations with a variety of women so that they would catch *su:le* early in life; for if it first attacked them when much older and weaker it could kill them. Since they deliberately tried to spread the disease in this manner, it tended to be more widespread among the Badagas than among other tribal groups.

Nowadays it is a great disgrace if a person is known to have a venereal disease and he is shunned socially. The seriousness with which it is treated is adumbrated in the proverb, "A debt is like a woman's disease (*su:le*)." In general the disease is still brought into the community by men who have had relations with non-Badaga women, such as urban prostitutes. If a man knows that he is infected he avoids infecting his wife.

It is said that a particularly virulent form of the disease can only be cured by intercourse with a donkey. If the donkey dies immediately afterwards, the man is presumed cured. In one village where I stayed a man borrowed the washerman's donkey, but was dismayed to find that it did not die.

STERILITY

6.62. Aside from venereal disease, the only other serious reproductive problem for Badaga is infertility, as we have seen (3.17). To understand this, it must be stated that they do not traditionally connect conception with the fertilization of an ovum, but see it as an effect of satisfaction in the minds of the couple. Badagas do believe men can be sterile, but so rarely that only one man would

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842 be that way for every thousand women who are. It is not assumed that a women is barren if her first marriage produces no children, however: the couple should divorce and both remarry, in order to have children with other spouses. By this procedure it will be seen whether a person is really infertile. Badagas believe infertility is caused by a [754] curse, or by sin done in one's previous life, or by [783] the sins of one's ancestors. In some villages a childless man would allow his brother to have [837] coitus with his wife in an attempt to gain off- [835] spring.

842 I was unable to identify any definite medicine for infertility. A barren girl was inspected nude by 759 a therapist and told that "she was intended to be a male and would never have childern." (Sometimes the therapist could tell from a girl's face if she were incurable, and told her so.) Nonetheless

842 the female therapist later on (around 1930) made 759 a positive suggestion for curing the barren girl: she should get hold of a small boy just after he 755 had defecated, and while his penis was in a some- what erect state; she should then gently suck on ●839 his organ. This was probably a reflection of the [827] idea offered somewhere in the Puranas that the semen of small boys is in vaporous form; later it becomes liquid; and in old age it has become solid. It is highly doubtful, however, whether any Badagas believe a woman can be inseminated through the mouth.

842 This particular therapist did have a medicine 757 for infertility, but apparently died with her secret long before I worked in her villages. She did know of a plant that cured the affliction, and once mentioned to a daughter-in-law that the cure was very difficult and that she had very high standards for its proper performance. In administering the medicine she also told women they should love their husbands to the utmost, for they were usually barren simply because their minds were not